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Himeji Cultural and International Exchange
Foundation newsletter editing volunteers
URL <http://www.himeji-iec.or.jp>

<People> Ms. Abed Aisha

Aisha is from Aleppo in Syria. She lives in Yumesaki-cho, Himeji with her husband and her three children. She actively participates in her children's school events and in local festivals. She has been teaching English at a community center since January.



Q : What brings you to Japan? How is your life in Japan?

A : My husband had traveled back and forth between Japan and Syria for work. My whole family has started living in Japan since 2014, because Aleppo became dangerous. At first, I felt lonely since the custom and culture are different and I did not have any acquaintances. But, I got a driving license last summer so I have been free to go shopping and I have been studying at Nihongo Hiroba which is a Japanese class in Egret Himeji. I have made a lot of friends and I am having a lot of fun now.

Q : What do you like ?

A : I am good at cooking and making cakes. All Syrian dishes are delicious. Sometimes ingredients are hard to find but I find a way to cook Syrian dishes often. I especially recommend Maqluba which is a rice cake cooked with eggplant. I also made a Japanese style lunch box for sports day, so my children were very happy about that.

Q : Please tell me good things about Syria.

A : Syria has old history and there are many historic sites. Syrian people are very open-hearted. Friends and relatives visit and get together in each other's home every day. They enjoy chattering having Arabic coffee and sweets.

Q : What are your dreams for future?

A : I am thinking about opening a Syrian food booth at the Himeji International Festival. I would also like to open the Syrian food and dessert restaurant if it is possible.

2017 Spring Events Information

<Hiromine shrine>

Rice planting festival – April, 3rd (Mon.)

-It is a Shinto ritual to tell the fortune of good harvests. People pray for good harvests of the year by simulating rice planting.



Praying good crops festival – April, 18th (Tue.)

Harvested rice seedling, that were planted in the rice planting festival, are presented before gods, in this Shinto ritual which prays for good harvests. There are two types of ceremonies. One is Hozoroishiki and the other is Soumashiki. The purpose of Soumashiki is running horses to tell the fortune of whether upcoming harvests will be good or poor.

<Nagoyama festival> April, 8th (Sat.)

It is held at the cemetery park called “Nagoyama cemetery”. This event combines the Flower Festival and celebration of the birth of Buddha. This Buddhist memorial service goes beyond a particular Buddhist sect and is held by approximately 100 temples in the city. Buddha’s stupa, where the remains of Buddha, presented by India in 1954, are kept, is famous all over the world.



<Himeji castle festival> May, 12th (Fri.) to 14th (Sun.)

It is the biggest festival in Himeji city. It consists of many events, which are Takigi (firewood) Noh, historic parade, Banshu local dance (where participants dance in sync), Yosakoi dance and so on. Many people gather every year.



<Himeji yukata festival> June, 22th (Thu.) to 24th (Sat.)

It is held around Osakabe shrine and Jonan park (south of the castle). Many people look forward to joining. It is said to have started around 1730. During this time, participants can receive several deals by wearing yukata.



The Women's Sport Teams in Himeji are Hot!

Seeing athletes play well in games tend to give us spirit and courage. Now, the women's sport teams whose activities are based in Himeji, are attracting a lot of attention! Let's cheer for the women from Himeji who aim to be top athletes in Japan!



AS HARIMA ALBION

This is a women's soccer club playing in division 2 of the Japan women's soccer league (Nadeshiko Japan). Up-and-coming players such as Sonoko Chiba who is a member of the Japan National soccer team (Nadeshiko Japan) and Fumina Katsurama who was picked as a U-23 Japan national soccer candidate belong to this team.

You can watch the home games of "2017 Plenus Nadeshiko Division 2 League" which start in March at WINK Athletic stadium (377-1 Chuji Himeji city). You can also enjoy half time shows and meet and greets!

[Schedule of home games, which are held at WINK Athletic stadium] ※All games are free.

Dates and kick off times	Rival teams
1:00 p.m. Sunday, April 2	SFIDA SETAGAYA FC (TOKYO)
1:00 p.m. Sunday, April 16	FC KIBI INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY Charme (OKAYAMA)
1:00 p.m. Sunday, May 28	CEREZO OSAKA SAKAI LADIES (OSAKA)
1:00 p.m. Sunday, June 25	CEREZO OSAKA SAKAI LADIES (OSAKA)
1:00 p.m. Sunday, July 2	FC KIBI INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY Charme (OKAYAMA)

Check official website for detailed information! h-albion.jp



Victorina Himeji

This Women's Volleyball team started in 2016 and is based in Himeji. The head coach is former Japan National team member, Yoshie Takeshita. The general manager is former Japan National team head coach, Masayoshi Manabe (from Himeji). They won a bronze medal at the London Olympics.

They have begun their efforts to enter a new league called "super league" which was announced by the Japan Volleyball organization last year. Check their official website for players and coaches! victoria-vc.jp

Be Prepared for Disaster

※※Registration of emails for disaster prevention※※

Hyogo Disaster Prevention Net has completed a new system to enroll in, that provides multilingual disaster prevention emails through automatic translation website. The languages include English, Chinese (simplified and traditional Chinese characters), French, German, Indonesian, Italian, Korean, Portuguese, Spanish, Thai, and Vietnamese.

<http://bosai.net/regist/>

When you register, information below will be e-mailed.

- Urgent Information from prefecture, city and town.
- Earthquake Information.
- Tsunami Warnings/ Advisories, Tsunami Information.
- Weather Information.
- Sediment Disaster Information.
- River Flood Information.
- Tornado Warning Information.



QR Code of
Bosai mail
registration site

It is unpredictable when and where disasters will happen. Make sure to obtain accurate information, and keep evacuation in mind.

「^{ひめじぼうさい}姫路防災web/ Himeji Bousai web : **Himeji Disaster Prevention web**」 You can get information about weather condition, typhoons, earthquakes, and other condition updates on Himeji Bosai web. You can also check rainfall, scale of an earthquake, information about evacuation, situations of damage, along with other details. Information about shelters can be checked as well.

www.city.himeji.lg.jp/bousai/

※※Indication of disaster information has been changed※※

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Information below is provided by each local government. If it is announced, be sure to carefully evacuate to a safe place.



「^{ひなんじゅんぴ}避難準備 / Hinan Junbi : **Evacuation preparedness**」

「^{こうれいしやとうひなんかいし}高齢者等避難開始 / Koureisha tou Hinan Kaishi : **Start evacuation of the elderly or the like**」

Those who are physically handicapped, senior citizens, and households with small child are required to start evacuation. All others should prepare for evacuation so they can do so whenever necessary.

「^{ひなんかんこく}避難勧告 /Hinan Kankoku : **Evacuation Advisory**」

Flee to an evacuation site. If you are in underground space, move to a safe place.

「^{ひなんしじ きんきゆう}避難指示 (緊急) / Hinan Shiji (Kinkyu) : **Evacuation order (Emergency)**」

If you have not evacuated yet, evacuate immediately. If you find it dangerous to get out of the house, move to a safer place inside your house.

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Let's Walk Along Semba River

Semba River is about a ten-minute walk to the west of Otemae street. Here, we would like to introduce some famous spots along the river starting from Semba Hontokuji-temple to the north. How about walking along the river while looking at cherry blossoms and Himeji Castle?

《① Semba Hontokuji-temple(city's designated cultural property)》

The temple was built in 1618. There are “Anzaisho,” where the Meiji emperor would rest, and “Boukyouzuka,” which is a mound built by German prisoners in First World War, as they thought of the castle of their hometown. A flea market, called “Semba Gobou-Raku-ichi,” is held on the first Sunday of March, May, July, September, and December.

《② Hakuro-bridge》

An original bridge-rail, built in 1933, still remains. There is still a trace of charred ruins from the fire of major air raid in 1945.

《③ Path of Princess Sen》

It is a narrow path starting from Hakuro-bridge, and located between Semba River and a moat of Himeji castle. The path is famous for viewing cherry blossoms.

《④ Mt. Otoko-yama》

Finishing the walk on the path, it is located west. In the middle of the mountain, there are Otoko-yama Hachiman-gu Shrine (for expelling evil spirits) and Sen-hime Tenman-gu Shrine (for romantic relationships). At the top of the mountain, there is a reservoir park, where you can take the best photos of Himeji Castle.



☆☆Information About the Himeji Cultural and International Exchange Foundation☆☆

■International Exchange Class Lecturer Wanted!

The International Exchange section of the Foundation holds “International Exchange Class” several times a year. International residents in Himeji become the teacher and introduce the culture and cuisine of their home countries. The purpose of the classes is to help Himeji citizens understand about internationalization in our area and interact with teachers from other countries through the lectures. We are currently looking for teachers for this class. If you are interested, please do not hesitate to contact below.

■22nd Himeji International Friendship Festival Volunteer Staff Wanted!

Day and Time: Oct. 29th, 2017 (Sun.) 10:00 a.m. ~ 3:00 p.m.

Place: Otemae Park

There are performances on stage, world cuisine, opportunities to experience different cultures, world games, and other activities. The registration of volunteers is going to start in May, people who can help us can contact the International Exchange Center or the International Exchange section of the Foundation, please check below for contact details.

◆◆◆Editor's Postscript◆◆◆

The *Ohanami*(cherry blossom viewing) season is coming soon. The origin of *Ohanami* came from people who invited deities onto their farm and prayed for good harvest with special foods and drinks under the tree, and enjoyed eating with deities. From the Heian period, the flower of *Ohanami* has been cherry blossoms, and it was established as a form of popular amusement among ordinary people in the Edo period. Please enjoy this unique Japanese custom by having *Ohanami* party at popular locations around Himeji Castle, Tegarayama Central Park, along Yumesaki River, and other locations in Himeji city.

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These names are used with the contributors' permission.

Their assistance is much appreciated.

You can read back numbers of “VIVA! ひめじ” at the website of the Himeji Cultural and International Exchange Foundation (International Exchange Section)(<http://www.himeji-iec.or.jp/>).

The next issue of “VIVA! ひめじ” will be available in June. Don't miss it! We invite your comments and suggestions.

We are always looking for translators and native speakers to assist us with translating and proofreading upcoming editions of “VIVA! ひめじ”. If you are interested, please contact us at the following address.

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